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SEPTEMBER 18, 1921.

## OPPORTUNITIES AS PLENTIFUL, BUT FOUGHT FOR HARDER, SAYS DAVIS

### HIGH CHARACTER NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS, HE DECLARES

**Labor Secretary Tells Graduating Class Life Is Vain If Not Devoted to Service of Others. Preaches Resignation to Inequalities of Circumstances and Ability.**

By James J. Davis, Secretary of Labor.

From an address delivered to a class of trade school graduates recently at Mooseheart, Ind.

America today is as full as ever of boundless opportunity. But we also know that opportunity was never more keenly fought for, and that none but the highest qualities of character can win it.

Every child in America is told that opportunity awaits him. And he is taught that he must fight if he is to have it and to hold it.

Ambition is born in every American home, and taught in every American school. There never was a time when the boys and girls of our country went forth with more zeal for high success. There never has been a time when our country held up before these beginners in life so many examples of great success and noble character, in business, in professions, in every walk of life.

#### Education Made America.

Our children begin their work with every hope and expectation of copying these examples before them. We train them as carefully as we can, to that end. It is this spirit, in our young people, and this education we give them in zeal and ambition, that have made America what it is.

I speak of these things because I want you to realize the competition that awaits you in the race for the prizes of life, and the effort and the character you will have to put forth to win them.

As the competition is more keen, the disappointments may be greater, and you will have need of all the character we have tried to give you not only to meet the dis-

appointments but to keep your head in the giddy hour of success.

Remember this, that though you may have left our shelter, all of these good men who have made possible this school for you, will follow you with their good wishes. The rest is up to you. See that you give these good men cause for pride in their work. For only then can you begin to take pride in yourselves.

It is my belief that as life brings to you its trials and hardships, its measure of accomplishment, all its varied experiences, you realize then, and only then, the value of what you have received here. Above everything else that has been given you, I believe you will find your most valued possession of all to be the useful trade that has been taught you.

Even though you may never be called upon to use it, you see its value. For the most carefully educated professional man may meet with reverses.

The inheritance that a hard-working father may have left for the education and upbringing of his chil-

dren may be swept away. Misfortune may befall the most zealous and deserving of men and women.

Disaster can happen at times to the most prudent and saving. In that hour vocational training comes into its real usefulness. A trade, an honest way of earning a living by the use of one's hands, is the most welcome refuge in the hour of need.

Many a life that might have been utterly broken is saved. Those who would have suffered shame and humiliation and the loss of self-respect are not left helpless and a public charge. They still are useful to themselves and to humanity.

In their very defeat they are still victorious. When other pursuits are taken from them, their willing hands may still contribute something of value to the world, and so they may earn an honorable living and hold up their heads among men.

#### Character Training Essential.

After training in a vocation comes education in character. All the other training given you would be useless without that. Character is your perpetual reminder that education is a privilege and a responsibility. It is something more than a distinction. It is something to be used, not simply for yourselves, but for others, for us all.

Only character can teach you how to make use of your training. If I were asked today what strikes me as the greatest recent advance we have made in education, I would say it is the discovery that education is an empty adornment if it is not put to the common service of us all.

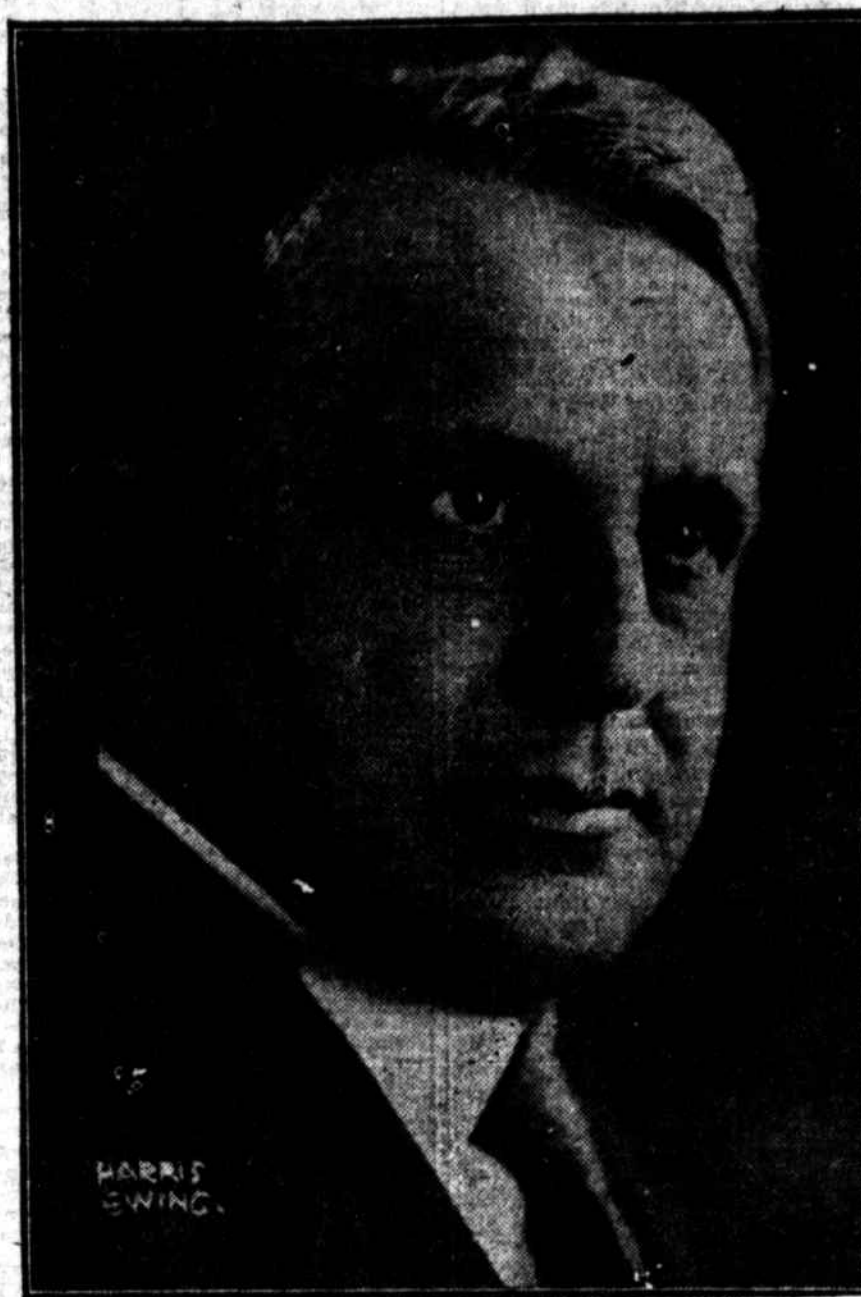
We have discovered, for that matter, that life itself is a vain thing if it is not devoted to service. Keep that forever foremost in your minds as an everlasting watchword—SERVICE.

It is true that we are created equal in human rights, but there will always be differences of ability. And always the element of circumstances enters into the most industrious life. You may have considerable ability and you may work faithfully, and still be denied the place you are sure you deserve.

#### "Be Resigned to Inequalities."

But do not be envious. Do not seek to drag down with your spite the most unfortunate. Be resigned to these inevitable differences of ability and good fortune. Do your part cheerfully and well, whatever it may be. Do not seek to pull everyone down, to the level of the poorest.

No matter where you may be later in life no matter what organization you may join, never stand for the principle of lowering the standard of efficiency to the level of the poorest



JAMES J. DAVIS, Secretary of Labor.

or weakest worker. Give merit the chance of free promotion.

You may some day be stockholders, or managers, or bosses. You may remain humble workers. So the turn of fortune, working through the measure of your ability, may decide in your case. But wherever you

are, be broad. Be kindly. Be modest in high position, be resigned if you are in the lower ranks.

Be broad. Believe what seems to you right to believe, but accord the same privileges to others. And be fair. To those who later become bosses, do not abuse your powers.

Do not become that frequent curse, wherever he is, the petty tyrant, the boss who browbeats.

#### Foster Workers' Self-Respect.

You who become employers, remember this, that the one thing that makes dividends and profits for stockholders is self-respect in the man who works. Anything that brings self-respect into the life of that man will bring profit to you, his boss.

That man works for you because you have made him like his work. For your sake, as well as his own, he speeds up his work. But the boss who thinks he has to hire spies on his men to learn what they are up to, the boss who treats the labor market like a cattle market, the boss who gets at his men with an ax, is sure to get the ax in the back of his own neck before everything is over.

But you who may remain at the machine or at the work bench, when you find a boss who is treating you squarely and like a man, pull yourself up to his level. Measure up to him with your own manhood or womanhood. He has given you the chance to make good, it is up to you.

Cast aside all envy of his more fortunate position. You will never rise to any high position by envy. Never envy but always imitate the successful man or woman. That is the best way to make a place for yourself.

#### Keep On Learning.

Then cultivate to the utmost what you have in you. Keep in mind this fact, that education is never finished. We are always educating ourselves. If we feel so disposed. We are always learning, to the end of our days. If we keep our eyes open. Be alert to better yourself. Each new day be better at your job than you were the day before.

Learn the work ahead of you, so that promotion will find you ready. Keep your eyes off the clock and always on your task. If you find that your job doesn't fit you, find another. Don't stick where you find yourself a misfit. Wait till you find what you can best do and then go after it and get it, and make the most of it.

If you find that your employer doesn't "see" you, doesn't appreciate what you are doing, some other employer will. Make your merit stand out so that it shines like a beacon, and never fear but that it will be discovered in time.

#### Avoid Underhand Things.

Above all, in the race for success in the world, do nothing but honorable

### DAVIS TELLS EMPLOYERS TO MAKE WORKERS HAPPY

**Watch for Hidden Talents and Develop Them, Says Labor Secretary, While Warning Workers to Be Cheerful Even If Success Seems Far Off.**

things. Discharge your own employer, if he wants to persuade you to do a dishonorable thing. Seek to win the prizes by merit. Avoid mean and underhand plotting to get the jobs of other honest workers away from them. That hurts, but in the end it hurts no one so much as yourself. Be patient for your own turn to come in its own good time. Come it will, if you earn and deserve it.

Be not jealous of the stronger man. If there is one at your side who shows a greater skill, who merits a swifter advance, let him go on. Do nothing that will hinder him. Help him, rather and in gratitude he will turn and help you. Never lose courage, never lose hope of promotion, through the delay seems long. The worker who loses heart is lost.

The man who thinks he is not appreciated, who thinks it is not worth his while to work his hardest on that account, is a loser from the start. Don't "soldier" on the job. It is more honorable to take a jimmy and a gun and rob the safe at night than to rob it by day through loafing on the job. By so doing you rob yourself of your own dearest possession—your self-respect. The loser is bound to be the most uncomfortable man in the world—he never dares look himself in the eye.

Last week I met again under strangely altered circumstances an old employer who once gave me work when I asked him for a job. That man and I had talked with each other, fought with each other, over labor matters in days gone by.

Last week the President invited me to a luncheon. He also had as a guest an old employer of mine. Here I was with the man who gave me a job back in '93. He is one of the country's great financiers.

Both of us born of poor parents, one a great leader in the country's financial work, and myself, in the

President's Cabinet, what a wonderful country.

**Helping Others Worth While.**  
Help others. What I have done for others was no loss to me. I gained by that. I gained, for one thing, the precious feeling of having been of use and help in the world. See to it that you acquire the same feeling. I can tell you truthfully that you will find it worth while.

And it is not merely money and clothing you may give. Give encouragement. Give praise where praise is due. Cheer the downhearted. When you are employers, help your workers to improve their lot in life. Remember that in many a carpenter a true architect stumbles waiting for his opportunity.

Watch for that hidden talent, and give it that opportunity. In many a foundryman a great engineer may be calling out for his chance in life. That chance may come, or it may not, of its own accord. If we have given that man the right training for his hands, and the right training for his heart, he will still be happy and useful at his work.

**Unshackle Hidden Talent.**  
But let us strive to make him happier still. Let us try to help him on to his higher self. Let us unshackle his hidden talent, so that he may reach his proper place in the world, and there turn and thank us for the life-giving chance we placed in his way.

Go out now to do your work in the world with that spirit of fairness and helpfulness. Do your best, and then help others to do theirs. Speak the cheering word.

Remember that only service counts. Remember that people are rich only in the number of their grateful friends. Remember that they are eminent only in the degree of good they have done to others. That is the true success, and that alone.

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#### "A SHELTER IN THE TIME OF STORM"

Here is one of hundreds of similar letters received by us during recent months.

August 18th, 1921.

Mr. Roy C. Clafin, President,  
Columbia School of Drafting,  
14th and T Streets N. W.,  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Clafin:

I am in receipt of my diploma for Mechanical Drafting, and I thank you very kindly for same. It may interest you to know that I have been working as a draftsman for several months, in fact, long before I completed my course.

I have tried to visualize where I would have been during this terrible business depression if I had not taken your course in Mechanical Drafting. Undoubtedly, I too, like several of my friends who have been given involuntary vacations of indefinite duration owing to business stagnation, would have been wandering around in a temperature of 100 degrees, plus or minus, in pursuit of a position. Ordinarily, I would not comment on unemployment, but when one has a mother and a sister to support unemployment then becomes a vital matter.

Fortunately, the training I have derived from my connection with your institution has enabled me to obtain a good position and despite business conditions I have reasons to believe it will be permanent.

What your school has done for me I know it has done for others, and I wish most heartily that you will continue successfully to fulfill your obligations in the future.

With best personal regards to you and your co-workers, I remain

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) HARRY W. STUBER.

Hoboken, New Jersey.

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